

On the supposed occurrence of Chubb's *Cisticola Cisticola chubbi* at Bukoba, Tanzania

Cisticola chubbi is stated to occur at Bukoba, Tanzania by all the standard texts, e.g. White (1960), Britton (1980), Peters (1986), and Short *et al.* (1990); Hall & Moreau (1970, Map 203) plotted a point on the western shore of Lake Victoria at the town of Bukoba. I found this puzzling since lakeside vegetation is quite simply the wrong habitat for the species. Chapin (1953) says it was collected by Grauer "near Bukoba"; this is doubtless the source quoted by the above authors. I found Grauer's two specimens in the American Museum of Natural History collection (Nos 593547-8), a male and a female, both collected on 17 May 1907. The locality on the label is, in fact, "Karagwe (Bukoba)". Britton's (1980) co-ordinates for Karagwe are 1° 30S, 31° 00E, i.e. about 80 km west of Bukoba, in higher country. According to D.C. Moyer (*in litt.*) the country around Karagwe and southwards along the road to Rulenge is rolling montane grassland with scattered *Protea* bushes, somewhat similar to the Ufipa Plateau, which is occupied by the closely related *C. nigriloris*.

Cisticola chubbi normally prefers more wooded situations than those currently existing around Karagwe. However, it is an adaptable species that readily occupies man-made habitats such as dense roadside bush and abandoned cultivation, and might be expected in habitat similar to that of its congener *C. nigriloris*. Moyer did not find *C. chubbi* on a brief trip through Karagwe at midday, when birds might not have been singing. It would be interesting to know what the current status and distribution of this species is around Karagwe and in the Bukoba District.

Confusion over the locality of Grauer's *C. chubbi* specimens arose because 'Bukoba' is the name of both a town and a district. Chapin must have assumed that Karagwe was the name of a village near the town of Bukoba, but when Grauer wrote "Karagwe (Bukoba)" on the label he meant that Karagwe was a village in the Bukoba District.

Older specimens labelled simply "Bukoba" should be treated with caution, and the same may be true in other cases where the name of a district is also the name of its principal town, e.g. Iringa.

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Notable records from Chumbe Island, Zanzibar

Chumbe Island (6°17S, 39°10E) lies about 12 km SSW of Zanzibar town and less than 30 km from the Tanzanian mainland. The island, roughly 2 km long by ½ km wide, rises only a few metres above the high tide level and consists of old coral rock covered with high-growing dense bush, including a few trees.

The following records coincided with a period of heavy storms associated with a tropical cyclone centred off the north Madagascar coast during mid January 1993.

Eurasian Swift *Apus apus*

On 16 January 1993 at least 2000 Eurasian Swifts were observed passing Chumbe Island travelling in a northerly direction. Most were flying at 20–80 m above the sea against a light monsoon wind blowing steadily from the NNE. Many were seen at close range and from above (by standing on top of a derelict lighthouse). Apart from their whitish throats, all birds seen were uniform brownish-black without any contrast between mantle and wings, which should exclude *A. a. pekinensis*, as well as both the African Black Swift *A. barbatus* and the Pallid Swift *A. pallidus*.

There are very few records of *Apus apus* from Zanzibar. It is not listed by Pakenham (1979), but J. Vincent noted swifts there on 5 October 1936 which he believed to be of this species, while 40–50 over Bawe Island (6°09S, 39°08E), Zanzibar on 23 January 1993 were also thought to have been this species (A. L. Archer, pers. comm.).

Pomarine Skua *Stercorarius pomarinus*

A second winter light morph was first observed passing Chumbe travelling in a northerly direction on 16 January 1993, and it is believed that it was this individual that was later washed ashore on 18 January following a heavy tropical storm. The bird was captured and measurements taken: wing 339, 341 mm; tarsus 52 mm; bill 37 mm. The inner primaries were new and fully grown, others were very worn. The bird was released after being photographed but was later killed by a cat.

This represents the first record from Tanzanian waters.

Bridled Tern *Sterna anaethetus*

Two adults were watched flying against a local storm on 17 January 1993. The black head and nape contrasted clearly against the paler uniform brownish-grey mantle. A narrow white superciliary stripe extended well behind the eye, while the white leading edges of the wings and white outer tail feathers were also clearly visible.

This is the first record from Zanzibar since those documented by Pakenham (1979) in September 1932 and July 1933.

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